Citizens Project

Honoring American Liberties in the Pikes Peak Region

Letters to the Editor
Gazette Telegraph
Box 1779
Colorado Springs, CO 80901

August 20, 1992

To the Editor:

Tony Marco, in his letter of August 20 (Gays are not Disadvantaged), continues to mislead the public regarding the nature of Amendment 2. He states once again that the purpose of Amendment 2 is to prevent gays and lesbians from having "special rights" or "protected class status". If this were indeed the purpose of this amendment, Colorado for Family Values would not have drafted the amendment to include the pernicious language prohibiting gays and lesbians from making any "claim of discrimination". Amendment 2, without this "claim of discrimination" language, might actually say what Colorado for Family Values claims. However, this discrimination language renders the remainder of the amendment (including the "protected status" argument) meaningless - you certainly can't have "special rights" when you are prohibited from having the most basic rights to protest if you are arbitrarily fired from a job, evicted from your home, or refused service in a public place.

If Amendment 2 passes, gay and lesbian Colorado citizens will be the only group of Americans to be legislatively barred from asking for or receiving protection from basic discrimination. As even CFV will admit, basic non-discrimination protection in America does not require passing income or influence "tests". Basic protection from discrimination has traditionally been extended to diverse groups experiencing discrimination, including cases of religious, age, family or gender-based discrimination.

When quoting "authorities" on civil rights in his letter, Mr. Marco apparently overlooked Jack Lang y Marquez, Director of the Colorado Civil Rights Division. In a recent Colorado Statesman interview on Amendment 2, he stated: "It's a common practice now to discriminate against homosexuals" and that CFV took the Supreme Court's criteria on special privileges "out of context". "That's why this amendment to my mind is so pernicious," he said, "it attempts to twist civil rights laws around to exclude a particular minority group. That's a move toward a totalitarian type of government."

I would say to Mr. Marco and to Colorado For Family Values: If "special rights" are your concern, then you should have written an amendment only about "special rights", and not one that by its own language permits and promotes discrimination against American citizens and overturns

lawful ordinances that protect only these basic rights. The three existing Colorado city ordinances simply promote non-discrimination for many groups of people; they do not grant gays "status equivalent to legitimate ethnic groups." The statement by Mr. Marco that Boulder's ordinance calls for affirmative action for gays is simply not true, and Citizens Project will be happy to supply copies of the three Colorado ordinances to all who have not had an opportunity to read them and to discover Mr. Marco's misrepresentations of their contents.

Be aware, Amendment 2 is a wolf in sheep's clothing. Before grandma (and our basic sense of justice) should be devoured, we must vote "NO" to this blatant attempt to create a second class citizenry in America..

Sincerely,

Amy Divine
Citizens Project